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ADAM.

Man omnipresent is,
 All round himself he lies,
 Osiris spread abroad
 Upstaring in all eyes;
 Nature his globed thought,
 Without him she were naught;
 Cosmos from chaos were unspoken,
 And God bereft of visible token.

THE SEEMING.

The mind's sphere
 Is not here;
 The ideal guest,
 With ceaseless quest,
 Pursues the best.
 The very better,
 Meanwhile her fetter,
 Her prescient desire,
 Higher and still higher,
 Is ever fleeing
 Past Seeming to Being;
 Nor doth the sight content itself with seeing;
 While forms emerge, they fast from sense are fleeing;
 Things but appear, to vanish into Being.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT.

CONCORD, MASS.

DR. WILLIAM JAMES ON GREAT MEN AND GREAT THOUGHTS
VERSUS ENVIRONMENT.

In the *Atlantic Monthly* for October, 1880, Dr. James contributed an article on the subject of the production of genius by the environment. Our readers are familiar with the clearness and cogency of this writer through his interesting articles in this Journal on "The Brute and the Human Intellects," "Mr. Spencer's Definition of Mind," "The Spatial Quale," etc., and with similar articles that he has published in M. Ribot's *Revue Philosophique*, and in "Mind" (the great English organ of psychology and philosophy). The article under present consideration in the *Atlantic* seems to us the best of all that has come from his pen. We copy two paragraphs from the article containing summary statements of his position:

"The evolutionary view of history, when it denies the vital importance of individual initiative, is, then, an utterly vague and unscientific conception, a lapse from modern scientific determinism into the most

ancient Oriental fatalism. The lesson of the analysis that we have made (even on the completely deterministic hypothesis with which we started) forms an appeal of the most stimulating sort to the energy of the individual. Even the dogged resistance of the reactionary conservative to changes which he cannot hope entirely to defeat, is justified, and shown to be effective. He retards the movement; deflects it a little by the concessions he extracts; gives it a resultant momentum, compounded of his inertia and his adversaries' speed; and keeps up, in short, a constant lateral pressure, which, to be sure, never heads it round about, but brings it up at last at a goal far to the right or left of that to which it would have drifted had he allowed it to drift alone."

"The plain truth is that the 'philosophy' of evolution (as distinguished from our special information about particular cases of change) is a metaphysic creed, and nothing else. It is a mood of contemplation, an emotional attitude, rather than a system of thought; a mood which is old as the world, and which no refutation of any one incarnation of it (such as the Spencerian philosophy) will dispel; the mood of fatalistic pantheism, with its intuition of the one and all, which was, and is, and ever shall be, and from whose womb each single thing proceeds. Far be it from us to speak slightly here of so hoary and mighty a style of looking on the world as this. What we at present call scientific discoveries had nothing to do with bringing it to birth, nor can one easily conceive that they should ever give it its quietus, no matter how logically incompatible with its spirit the ultimate phenomenal distinctions which science accumulates, should turn out to be. It can laugh at the phenomenal distinctions on which science is based, for it draws its vital breath from a region which—whether above or below—is at least altogether different from that in which science dwells. A critic, however, who cannot disprove the truth of the metaphysic creed, can at least raise his voice in protest against its disguising itself in 'scientific' plumes. I think that all who have had the patience to follow me thus far will agree that the Spencerian 'philosophy' of social and intellectual progress is an obsolete anachronism, reverting to a pre-Darwinian type of thought, just as the Spencerian philosophy of 'force,' effacing all the previous phenomenal distinctions between *vis viva*, potential energy, momentum, work, force, mass, etc., which physicists have with so much agony achieved, carries us back to a pre-Galilean age."

Dr. E. Gryzanowski (known to us by his able articles in the *North American Review*) has written from Leghorn a letter of recognition to the author, the following extracts from which we are permitted to use:

"Whatever I may have written seven or eight years ago, I have now the liveliest moral and intellectual interest in the triumph of that truth which is embodied in your thesis. I need not disown the passage quoted by you, but, if I were to write it again to-day, I should not leave it without the correction pointed out by you; that is to say, I should lay greater stress on the germ and its typical potentialities than on the soil and its purely nutrient capabilities. I not only agree with you on the subject, but I almost feel inclined to go a little farther than you, and to reinstate spontaneity in all the rights and honors it used to enjoy before the advent of materialism. I would, with you, say: There is a soil, or menstruum, of outward circumstances, which must be under the sway of known and knowable laws of causation. There are, imbedded in this soil (or immersed in this menstruum), the germs (or ferments) of typical individuation, which *seem* to be under the sway of unknown and mostly unknowable laws of cellular (not molecular) causation, and, I would add, the causal *prius* of these germs or ferments—i. e., that which, though unknown itself, manifests itself as spontaneous differentiation, and which, *pro tanto*, negates causation and can modify it or bid it stop—this causal *prius* must belong to a third sphere, not of causation and necessity, nor of absolute arbitrariness, but of self-determination (*selbst Bestimmung*). God has been called the *causa sui*, the point where cause and effect coincide. But we need not go so far; what we want is the relation of cause and effect in the lower regions of finite and imperfect *selbst Bestimmung*, called human ethics. Here I maintain (inducting, not postulating it) that, if the reign of law is absolute in physico-chemical causation (so that effect can be calculated from cause, and cause inferred from effect), and if the reign of law begins to be, to say the least, 'parliamentary' in the world of organic evolution (which is a world of instincts and emotions), remaining absolute only in so far as the cell, though autonomous as *form*, is subject to the law as a piece of molecular matter—his Majesty becomes a mere citizen in the world of conscious volition, which would be a world of free-will or of freedom, if the willing agents did not continue to be animals, and, as animals, pieces of matter, so that necessity, contingency, and freedom must coexist in these complex beings.

"Or thus: If, in the inorganic world, we have the equation *causa = effectus*, so that cause and effect are mutually calculable, we have in the organic world the inequality *causa < effectus*; we see the whole effect, but only part of the cause, viz., the physico-chemical part. To make here, too, the cause equal to the effect, we must add to it the physiological fictions called *soul, life, instinct, emotion*. And, thirdly, we have in the sphere of self-conscious volition nothing but apparent effects, the cause being evanescent, inconceivable, irrational. Both from the materialistic and from the rationalistic (or utilitarian) standpoint, these effects (when moral actions) appear foolish and insane. How can there be law and causation in morals? In the name of what logic or common sense must I practice self-denial, altruism, heroism, martyrdom, *Mitleid* [compassion] (which is *Leid* [pain] not pleasure), not to speak of honesty, frugality, and other devices of human torment and botheration? Was it ever easy to do one's duty, and does not this world belong to the strong, the clever rogue, the surviving fittest, rather than to the guileless, kind, and honest man? That which avenges itself always, and for which there is no forgiveness on earth, is the error of calculation—the error of judgment, not the curmudgeon's sins. If, then, we are told to be altruistic rather than egoistic, bad reckoners rather than *cœurs méchants*, if we are told, when wronged or insulted, not to chase, bite, scratch, or kill our enemy, but to forgive him (so that his action, which would be a cause of certain effects called revenge, shall be no cause at

all)—these commandments imply that we, as morally quasi-free agents, belong to a sphere in which the working of causation may be stopped by an autonomous force called 'will.'

"This world, as a mass of metals and gases, is an indifferent world, neither good nor bad. It became a bad world through the advent of organic life, where passion and revenge reign supreme, and none but the fittest survive. And it continues to be a bad world, even after the advent of man, who can choose between revenge and mercy, between good and evil. It continues to be a bad world, not because man always chooses the evil, but because, when choosing the good, he ceases to fit into this world, he ceases to be the fittest in the realm of causation, and causation destroys him, slowly or quickly, as the case may be.

"Free-will, as a moral agency, is and must be at war with causation, *i. e.*, must be able to act on principles which are not those of pure reason.

"What stands behind the will we do not know, but, if pressed for an answer, I should not consider myself defeated by accepting Mr. Spencer's deputy-god, or anything of that kind.

"Mr. Spencer, I dare say, admits the existence of such things as axioms of pure reason, drawn not from experience by induction, nor from principles by deduction, but *a priori*. The deniers of free-will are, consequently, in the same necessity of seeing in pure reason or in the '*a priori*' either a quality of matter or a 'deputy-god.' They all believe in pure reason; but, if pure reason has its *a priori*, why should not free-will have its *a priori* of intuitive axiomatic obligation?

"I confess I cannot get on in philosophy, or arrive at any comprehensive world view, without the assumption (inducted, not postulated) of such a third sphere of (conditioned) spontaneity. This mechanizing, mathematicizing, and calculating of every thing in the world, from the unseen heroisms of private life to railway accidents, and from the death of Jesus of Nazareth to the yearly number of misdirected letters, is beginning to be tiresome and provoking. In Mr. Spencer's sociological world there is no room either for self consciousness, or for genius, or for morals. In it all action, whether in speech or motion, is reflex action, and the causes of obligation, in so far as this obligation transcends calculable utility, must be sought in folly inherited or acquired. I, therefore, cling to my belief in three worlds:

"1. The inorganic world: reign of law and necessity.

"2. The organic world: reign of law and necessity, *plus* dawn of spontaneity (in form of individual life, instincts, spontaneous variation).

"3. The human world: reign of law and necessity (in so far as man is a mass of matter), *plus* dawn of spontaneity (in so far as man is an animal), *plus* dawn of free volition (in so far as man *can* defy nature and causation, and *can* refuse to be guided by pure reason alone).

"Each of these spheres has its own evolution. The survival of the fittest remains true in all, but the standard of fitness changes, and, in the Christian religion, the lowly and the weak become the terror of the strong.

"People have tried hard to reconcile evolutionism with morality, the survival of the fittest with the institution of hospitals and almshouses, etc. But it is useless to try the impossible, and I rejoice, for it is this very irreconcilableness which will sooner or later free us from the incubus of materialism. The dilemma being either materialism without morality or morals with materialism relegated to its proper sphere, mankind will, I think, in the long-run pronounce in favor of the second horn, and if it does not (for there is no telling), it will go to the dogs, and below the dogs to molecules, and below the molecules to atoms and chaos."